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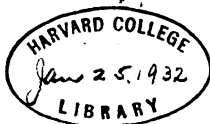
MEMOIRS
OF A LATE
OFFICER IN THE ARMY
OF THE
UNITED STATES.

BY AN OFFICER IN THE SAME SERVICE.

**WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.**

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real name of the officer, whose memoir is briefly given
in the following pages, has been omitted. This, how-
ever, does not affect the truth of the narrative, as detailed
by the writer.

PREFACE.

[THE following observations of the author of this volume were written in reference to the sickness which he suffered, when on his way to the military station where he became acquainted with the subject of the narrative: they are inserted here as a suitable introduction, and in the hope that they will arrest the attention of many men to whom they are appropriate.]

* * * The expectation of recovery was not encouraged by my physician, and was scarcely indulged at all by myself. In the kind arrangements of Providence this was not the first time my serious and

solemn attention had been called to the prospects of man's spirit, when death shall come to lay his body in the grave.

I had been, when a boy, taught by a beloved mother the instructions of the Bible. And though, as I grew up, I had been led to entertain some doubts of the truth of what I had learned in childhood, yet, after examining closely and carefully the evidence on which the claims of the Bible rest, as a revelation from God, and of Jesus Christ as the divine Redeemer, I became fully convinced that the Scriptures are the word of God, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that his gospel reveals the only way of reaching the life and immortality which it has brought to light.

Thus convinced, I studied the Scriptures, I bowed myself before Him of whom, formerly, I had thought as a being far off, and unconcerned about me and my

course, and I placed my hopes of eternal life upon the finished atonement of the Saviour, believing that on the cross he bore our sins, and carried our sorrows, and that by his stripes I might be healed.

Such were my thoughts, and such my hopes, as I lay on what, in all probability, was my death-bed.

Can any one wonder that I, a soldier, should take such a solemn view of death, and should attach so much importance to the destiny of the spirit in the eternal world? If there is such an one, I would say that, being a soldier, I was not the less a man, and liable to the same results of my conduct in eternity as others. And while I felt, with all the energy of a soldier's heart, that to be ready to die, and that promptly, whenever duty should require, or to meet any danger, when called on, was my business and my ho-

nour ; I also felt that, because I was a soldier, I was not therefore free from the obligation that rests on all men to cultivate piety, and to prepare to meet my Judge. Nay, it seemed to me that, being a soldier, and more liable than other men to be cut off suddenly in fight, or by exposure to unhealthy climates, it was more especially my duty not to put off the preparation for death, lest I should not be ready when called upon unexpectedly to die. How many of my comrades—brother officers—whom I dearly loved, have realized, when suddenly arrested by fever, by the overwhelming waters, by the bullets and knife of the Indians, that the solemn warning, “Prepare to meet thy God,” means as much to one human being as it does to another !

THE LIFE OF AN OFFICER.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST COMPANIONS.

THE father of Isaac Fuller was a clergyman, in Connecticut. He was a learned and pious man; and, being a descendant of one of the pilgrim families that first settled in New England, he was, like them, very strict in his attention to the duties of religion. His mother was also pious. But his parents were not as watchful as they should have

been over the temper and disposition of their son. They put too much dependence on merely instructing him in the knowledge of the Scriptures, without showing how religion should govern the conduct at all times, and teaching him to live constantly under its influence.

Piety is kind, and lovely, everywhere, and parents should try to recommend it to their children, by letting them see that it makes their own dispositions mild, and gentle, and full of affection. Isaac's parents, like many other good people, made a mistake here, and so presented the duties of religion, as to make them appear gloomy and uninviting to their child, whilst they did not use their authority to correct his stubborn disposition. This fact,

though it is no excuse for Isaac's dislike to religion, may account for some of the false opinions which he afterwards believed, and the course of life he followed.

From the time Isaac was three years old, Mr. Fuller was very careful in requiring him to attend to his lessons. He had to spend a certain number of hours every day with his books; but, when they were over, he was allowed to go where he pleased; and, as is too often the case when children are left unrestrained, he commonly found playmates who did him no good. They were generally ignorant boys, of bad habits, who took pleasure in saying and doing, when they were by themselves, what they would not dare to say or do before their parents, or on any account be willing they should

know. It was among such companions that Isaac first heard the name of his Creator spoken profanely, which, at home, he had never heard mentioned but with reverence, and in worship. Here, too, he found boys not afraid to tell falsehoods—a sin which he knew was hateful to God, and could not be concealed from him. Here he heard vile language, which he would not venture to repeat in the presence of his parents. In this manner was young Isaac led into evil. For although he was not easily induced to swear, and seldom told an untruth, yet the habit of being so much with those who were guilty of these vices, made him think less of their sinfulness, and tended to harden his conscience.

CHAPTER II.

COLLEGE.

ISAAC advanced rapidly in his education, under the care of his father, and at the age of fifteen became a pupil of Yale College, of which the celebrated Dr. Dwight was, at that time, the president. The last words of his father to him, as he left him in New Haven, to pursue his studies, were, "*My son, remember this is not the only world for which you were made.*"

The sprightliness of young Fuller, and his interesting appearance, soon made him a great favourite with his class-mates, most of whom were

several years older than himself. Here was another source of danger. His vanity was flattered by the notice that was taken of him, and he was brought into the company of young men, more advanced in the ways of the world than himself, and therefore capable of doing him more injury than youth of his own age.

It was not long before the habit of morning and evening prayer, to which he had been accustomed from his earliest childhood, became unpleasant to him. He would feel ashamed, and sometimes too guilty, to pray. At first he omitted it occasionally, then for several weeks together, and at last he gave it up entirely. All this time he was gradually led farther and farther astray by his companions, and he had not been more than a year in

college, before he entered into all the pleasures and vices in which they set him an example.

Fuller lodged in the same room, at college, with a student who was a young man of uncommon talents, who was the head of a club which frequently met to spend an evening in drinking, singing, and conversation, much of which was of an impure and injurious kind. A youth like Fuller is easily drawn away by such temptations, though his conscience, tells him he is doing wrong to come near them. He was often present at these meetings, and his mind was every time more filled with sinful thoughts and purposes, and his heart more hardened in the ways of sin.

His room-mate and many of the club were, or pretended to be, infi-

dels. They said they would believe nothing which was not according to their own knowledge of things, and refused to respect the Bible as true, because it told of miracles and wonders, such as they had never witnessed. Fuller had seen too much of the power of the Christian religion, in the lives of his parents, to allow him to doubt that it was all a deception. And the clear sense, and sound faith, shown by his father, in the letters he wrote to him on this subject, made him think that he was at least as likely to be right as his worldly and vicious companions in college. But, though his own sense and education kept him from denying the gospel to be true, the conversation and ridicule of his associates unsettled his mind, and filled him with doubts. and he determined

to "eat, drink, and be merry," without care for the future. Thus easily does a wicked life encourage men to doubt that pure truth which condemns them; and thus easily, too, when men reject the gospel, are they ready to excuse any sin.

It was not until Isaac had been at New Haven a year, that Mr. Fuller became acquainted with the course his son was following. His letters home had been so kind to his parents, and so respectful on the subject of religion, that his father did not suspect that such a change had taken place in his character. But he discovered the truth, during a visit Isaac made to his home; and the young man was so confused and ashamed, that he solemnly promised his father to reform his life, and abandon the companions who were

leading him to ruin. He kept his resolution for a short time after his return to college; but the infidel club again drew him into their snares, and he soon fell into his former habits.

His distance from home, and the excellent letters which he wrote, still kept his parents and friends deceived as to his true character. And as he was known to have been religiously brought up, many supposed that he was a very moral and exemplary young man. Among those who were of this opinion, was an orphan girl, who lived with her aunt, in Mr. Fuller's neighbourhood, and to whom Isaac was attached. Sarah had been taught, by her aunt, the truths of the Bible, and believed them all without a doubt. And she not only believed them, but acted

according to them, and showed in her life that she wished to obey God.

As Isaac was the son of the minister, and she knew how he had been educated at home, and as he always behaved with the greatest sobriety when on his visits from college, Sarah thought he was possessed of at least good moral principles. He was very careful never to let her hear him express his doubts about the Bible; or to tell her that he never prayed; or that he spent much of his time in the company of the lovers of pleasure, and the despisers of God's word. Thus was she deceived; and engaged herself to him for marriage. Fuller spent four years in college, and then he returned home. His father gave up his farm to him, and soon afterwards he and Sarah were married.

CHAPTER III.

IN THE ARMY.

For three years Fuller and his wife seemed to live very happily. They lived with his parents, and every thing seemed to prosper around them. He was separated from the companions who had led him into sin; and there was nothing in his outward conduct which showed any bad dispositions within.

It might have been supposed that, living in a pious family, and attending on public worship, the unbelief of Isaac's mind would have been removed, and that he would have been glad to escape from his doubts.

But it was not so. He had become a settled unbeliever, and his principles were entirely corrupted. The first three years of his married life were spent happily, for he conformed to the old habits of the family, and was afraid to have his true feelings known to his wife and parents. But Sarah began to perceive that all was not right with him, and gradually discovered that her husband was a rejecter of Christianity!

Fuller began to grow tired of his quiet life in the country. His habits at college had given him a relish for company and dissipation, which now revived. His mother died, and his restraints were diminished. He sometimes showed an evil temper, and was occasionally guilty of intemperance.

About this time the war be-

tween the United States and Great Britain commenced. Fuller was anxious to enter the army, that he might have a little variety in his way of living; and, for the sake of indulging this wish, he was willing to leave his wife, and infant daughter, and aged father, and to give up the care of the farm, on which they chiefly depended for support. His family begged him not to think of leaving them in that manner; but his mind was made up, and he accepted an offer which was made him by a recruiting officer, that he should be commissioned as ensign if he could raise a company of men to enlist in the army. This he easily did, and, amidst the prayers and tears of his father and wife, Fuller left the home of his childhood, and the abode of peace and piety, for the

angers of war, and the society of worldly men.

The division of the army to which Fuller belonged marched into Canada; and he so distinguished himself there by his bravery, that he was soon raised to the rank of second lieutenant. He was in Fort Sandusky when Colonel Croghan was besieged there, with only one hundred and eighty men, by twelve hundred men, under the British general, Proctor. It was determined by the American officer to make an attack, by night, on a battery from which the enemy were firing upon them during the day. But the night on which it was to be attempted was so dark that they could not determine the precise direction in which the battery stood, and knew not how to point the cannon.

It was necessary that some persons should go from the fort, and fix a light in the right direction. This was a very hazardous undertaking ; but Fuller and another person went out towards the enemy's battery, and managed to hang a lantern on the top of a tree, with its light side toward the American fort, and returned safely, without being discovered.

It was many months before Fuller was able to visit his home. In the camp he found many temptations to a life of pleasure, and he did not resist them. He was often to be found drinking and singing with the merry, and practising the maxim to live pleasantly whilst life lasts. And if he had any thoughts of religion, or of his soul, they were only to doubt the truth, and were soon

driven from his mind. Yet his conscience often reproved him, when he thought of the manner in which he had exchanged the quiet of his family for the dissipation of the army.

In the third campaign Fuller served under General Macomb at the battle of Plattsburgh, and, for his bravery on that occasion, was promoted to be first lieutenant in the army. Negotiations for peace soon afterwards commenced, and Fuller obtained permission to visit his family.

CHAPTER IV.

AT HOME.

SOME changes had taken place during his long absence. His father had been dead for several months. The only thing that gave him sorrow, in his last moments, was the fear that his son could never be reclaimed. "Sarah," said he to Isaac's wife, "repeat to your husband the dying blessing of his father, and his last solemn exhortation to turn to the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near." The old man then embraced and blessed his children, and departed in peace.

Fuller had heard of this event before he left the army, and, unbeliever as he pretended to be, he could not help feeling a satisfaction that his father now realized the rest and blessedness to which, as a Christian, he had long looked forward.

There were now many reasons that should have induced Lieutenant Fuller to leave the army. The quiet of his country home, his amiable wife, and two lovely children, were enough to make him willing to give up the toils and dangers of a soldier's life. His father had left him the farm as his property, and this was sufficient for the comfortable support of his family. It was but just, too, for their sakes, that he should stay and protect them, and provide for their wants. All this seemed very charming for a while.

But Fuller's disposition was changed. He was not satisfied with a retired life; and, though he loved his family, he loved those pleasures more which he could not obtain at home; and he therefore determined to continue in the army, and to take his family with him wherever he might be ordered to go. Accordingly, in 1816, he removed them from their happy dwelling to Fort Mackinac, between lakes Michigan and Huron. The country was now at peace, and the officers and troops of the station were left to the evils of idleness. Great immorality prevailed; and, notwithstanding the efforts of his wife, Fuller was often engaged in scenes of disgraceful pleasure.

After spending two or three years, in this manner at the fort, Fuller

became tired of confinement in one place, and at length consented to resign his commission. This he did in 1818, and he brought his delighted family back to Connecticut. Mrs. Fuller had strong hopes that he had become satiated with the life of dissipation he had been leading, and would at length settle down, quietly, as a farmer, and return to the religious habits in which he had been brought up.

But she was disappointed. He felt at times the evil of his ways; but his repentance was not strong or sincere enough to break his disposition to sin. His temper was sour: he was dissatisfied and discontented, and his lovely wife had to bear much unkindness during the three years of his stay in Connecticut. Sometimes he drank to intoxi-

cation. His passion was violent, and he did not fear to swear profanely. His infidelity increased with his wickedness, and the farther he went into sin, the bolder did he become in opposing himself to religion. His dissipation had brought him into debt, and it was necessary he should do something more for his support. He again asked for a commission in the army, and after some difficulty was taken back into the service, in 1821, as a second lieutenant of artillery. By the time his accounts were settled, and his debts paid, very little was left of his father's property, and it was necessary that Fuller should remain in the army as a means of support.

CHAPTER V.

UNBELIEF.

IN the fall of 1830 I was ordered to repair to a fort in one of the southern States. When I arrived at the station, only two officers were there; the others belonging to the station, and most of the common soldiers, having been sent into the Indian country, to protect the gold mines from being plundered. The next day, however, several officers, with part of the troops, returned, and we soon formed a pleasant society.

We were sitting around the fire, at the commanding officer's, engaged in conversation, when a gen-

tleman, whom I had not before seen, stepped up to me, and said, in a haughty manner, "Since these gentlemen do not think me worthy of so much notice as to introduce me to you, I must introduce myself. I am Lieutenant Fuller."

I was astonished at this conduct. I knew nothing of the man, and had heard but little of him. But I observed that the officers seemed not to respect him; and the only reply they made to his remark was, that they did not know that he and I were not acquainted.

There were but few families at the fort. One of the most agreeable of these was Lieut. Fuller's, and, through his kind invitation, I soon became acquainted with it. His wife had a mild and intelligent, but sad expression of countenance, and

her whole appearance and conversation were those of a woman of devout piety. She had with her three daughters, one of whom had been lately married to an officer, and one son, a lad. The youngest of the family was a little girl, whose situation led me to take the greatest interest in her. She was a cripple, from a disease of the hip, and, though she was over thirteen years of age, did not appear to be more than eight or ten. She suffered great pain, but bore it with the sweetest temper; and it gave me pleasure to do what I could to instruct and amuse her. This I was able to do frequently, as I soon became a boarder in the family. Little Julia was very fond of books, and I was in the habit of spending part of every evening in reading to her. Mrs.

Fuller, and the lieutenant himself, were also frequent listeners at such times. Religious books were often chosen, as the most profitable; and, as I read them, Fuller would frequently express his opinions against the pious sentiments they contained.

I remember, one evening, I was reading from one of Dr. Chalmers' sermons, when Fuller cried out, "Stuff! How can men be cheated with such stuff?"

"Why, what is there, in all this, that you call stuff?" I asked.

"All that nonsense about the expanding powers of the soul, and the glories of heaven, and the bliss of being in the presence of God, and seeing Jesus Christ. What is that but stuff, with which enthusiasts cheat themselves and other people?"

"If these things were not certain

and real, such descriptions of them, and such exhortations to seek them, might be called stuff; but when they are made known upon the highest authority, surely no wise man will call them so."

"That might be," answered he, "if the authority could be made out to be true. But I have often tried to find out the truth, which others pretend to have found, but could never see it."

"Perhaps you have not gone about the search in the right way. Have you examined the evidence which learned men have brought to prove the Bible to be from God? or have you read only the objections which the opposers of the Christian religion have made?"

"Why, as to that, I have read upon both sides. And if the truth

is so plain, I ought not to have missed it, as I was taught to believe the Bible in former days." He then related some of the history of his early life, which has been already given in former chapters.

"But, Mr. Fuller, have you ever made trial of the plan recommended by our Saviour—'*If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself?*' Have you tried the truth of this declaration by letting the principles of the gospel rule your heart and life?"

"If I have good reason to doubt the truth of religion, is it fair to ask me to practise it first, and see if that does not make me believe it? No, no. The only fair way is to convince me of its truth first, and then call upon me to practise it."

“ Well, my dear sir, that is what I want you to do. What the Saviour meant by that expression, I suppose to be this : Men doubt and object to the gospel, not because they have not evidence, or understanding, but because they will not use them in the right way. It is because their hearts—their dispositions and wishes—are opposed to the holiness of the truth, that they choose to reject it. This keeps them from seeing the truth. But if they would repent of their sins, and leave them off—which conscience teaches them they ought to do—and would come in a candid, humble manner to examine whether the Bible be true or not, they would believe.”

“ You tell me,” answered Fuller, “that it is not my reason which makes me doubt, but my bad heart ;

and so you ask me to believe this, though I do not believe it, and act according to your belief, and I will then believe as you do!"

"I did not suppose you would deny the wickedness of the heart. And I leave it to your own conscience and observation to decide whether men, in general, are pure and virtuous; and whether they are the wise and good who reject the Bible, or men of an opposite character."

"Ah, that is a kind of argument which is also unfair. It makes a man give evidence against himself, and tries to make him judge of a religion by a rule which it furnishes itself."

"Mr. Fuller, God has written his law on our consciences. He has given us a sense of right and wrong, and to this sense the Bible appeals.

It is because men will not listen to their consciences, and because they do not like the pure doctrines of the Bible, that they make up their minds to disbelieve it."

"Well," replied the lieutenant, "if you will have it so, let it be so: but I can see no justice in condemning me because I cannot believe a thing against which there are so many strong objections."

"But," said Mrs. Fuller, "why will you dwell so much on these objections? Is there not enough, that is plain and positive, to convince you, if you would only receive it? Why was not the clear mind of your father staggered by these objections, if they are so strong? Why are there any Christians, the joy and comfort of whose lives is their hope that rests on the Bible?"

"Many things," Fuller said, "have been believed, quite as heartily, which you will not pretend to be true. The pagan believes in his idol; the Mohammedan believes in his prophet. You do not hesitate to condemn them as deceived. Why may not your religion be false as well as theirs?"

"But, my dear sir, you notice but a part of Mrs. Fuller's question. Why was your own strong-minded father a Christian? He who was so good and wise a man, could he not judge of the evidence for and against the Bible? And you surely are not serious in placing the absurd and shocking doctrines of paganism, or Mohammedism, in comparison with the pure and rational truths of the Bible. The question for you to consider is, is there evidence enough

to satisfy a sincere inquirer after truth, that the Bible is a revelation from God? And if you do candidly examine that question, I cannot doubt you will come to the conclusion to which every such inquirer, as I believe, is brought.

“It has often been said,” I continued, “and it should be remembered by those who stumble at the difficulties of the Bible, that it is in the nature of things that there should be these difficulties. For if the objects we can see and handle are often above our understanding, it is surely not strange that spiritual things should not all be so simple and plain as to have no difficulties. Origen, in the third century after our Lord, remarked that ‘he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from Him who is the author

of nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it as are found in the constitution of nature.' Of course he who denies the Bible to have come from God, because it has these obscurities, may, for the same reason, deny that the world was made by him. So that if difficulties drive you from revelation, they must drive you to atheism."

CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE

MR. FULLER and I had frequent conversations, of a character like that described in the last chapter. The principal objections he made were, that many parts of the Bible are absurd; other portions indistinct, or incorrect; and that many of its statements and doctrines are improbable and repulsive.

For instance, he would assert that a wise being would not have directed so many ceremonies, of various kinds, as are contained in the laws of Moses; or have directed such unintelligible writings as the pro-

phesies and the book of Revelation. He said it was impossible that the ark could have contained all the animals that are said to have gone into it. And, again, that the researches of learned men prove the world to be older than the Bible says it is. Neither would he believe that God would permit such cruelties as were practised by the Jews, when they took possession of Canaan; or that he would punish the wicked for ever.

It was all in vain that he was shown that the history of the Old Testament was established by the best evidence; that it was certain that the prophecies were made long before the events foretold took place; that all travellers proved that some of the laws in Leviticus, which he most ridiculed, were highly benefi

cial to persons living in that climate. It was in vain to show, by calculations, that the ark could easily contain all that is said to have entered it; and to prove that the Chinese pretensions to a date far older than the creation, were shown, by astronomy itself, to go back no farther than 2357 years before Christ. Equally useless it was to tell him of the degraded character of the nations destroyed by the Jews, and to show that it was no more inconsistent with the mercy of God, than pestilence, and earthquakes, and tempests, by which so many are constantly destroyed on the earth; or to appeal to the consciences of men, everywhere, that the wicked look forward to future punishment, and that it is necessary that the heaviest penalty should be affixed to

sin; and that the way of salvation, provided in Christ, takes away all that could be said against the goodness of God in eternal punishment. His heart was opposed to the truth, and he would not see the light, because it showed that his deeds were evil, and that he must repent or perish.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EFFECTS OF UNBELIEF.

AT one time I noticed that Fuller was absent from table, and from all his accustomed places of resort, for several days. Upon inquiring, I learned that he was subject to fits of gloom, and that he then shut himself up entirely alone for several days together. When he came out again, at the time referred to, I had a conversation with him on the cause of these gloomy feelings, and, although he did not speak very fully on the subject, it was plain that the dark state of his mind, on the subject of religion, was the chief source of his

suffering. For, with all his pretended confidence in his unbelief, his conscience would not let him rest, and he felt an awful dread of that future world, which he was ready to speak of with ridicule.

As these seasons of gloom became more frequent, his temper became more irritable; and I had reason to believe that his excellent wife had more to endure than came to the knowledge of any stranger. I have seen her in tears, which I had no doubt were occasioned by his unkind conduct towards her. As from my living in the family, and my attention to little Julia, Mrs. Fuller regarded me more as a son than a stranger, she did not think it improper to speak of the behaviour of her husband, and to ask me what course she ought to pursue. All

that I could do was, to recommend her to continue to manifest that Christian meekness and patience which she had always shown.

Once, after he had been shut up in his solitude for several days, I asked him to take a walk with me, that I might have an opportunity of a faithful conversation with him. It was a beautiful day, in early spring, and I shall never forget the impression then made upon my mind by the contrast between the appearance of nature, rejoicing, as it were, under the smiles of a kind Providence, and the melancholy which covered the mind of Fuller.

After proceeding for some time in common conversation, I alluded, as delicately as I could, to the singular custom of keeping himself out of sight, and giving way to gloom.

I told him that, in speaking with him on this subject, I was influenced by nothing but a desire to promote his comfort, and the happiness of his family. I then remarked how much his conduct injured himself, and distressed his friends; and asked him if he would not put so much confidence in my friendship as to tell me the real cause of his unhappiness.

"I feel," said Fuller, "the force of what you say. I know that my conduct must appear foolish, and that it distresses my family: but there is no person in the world who can relieve the almost insupportable gloominess of my life; and when I am shut up in that way, it is to give myself up to the horrors of a hell within me, which is too black and dreadful to be known by any human

being. What these feelings come from, or what is their precise nature, I cannot tell: all I know is, that there is a hell of despair and misery within me."

"Mr. Fuller," I replied, "your language is very strong: but are you sure there is no remedy for the inward darkness and gloom of which you complain? I have heard of feelings something like yours, though not so distressing, proceeding from some bodily disease. Indeed, I have known my own spirits to be dreadfully depressed during a complaint of the liver. Perhaps there is some such cause of your distress."

"No, no," he said: "it is no liver complaint. I never had such a disorder."

"May it not then be caused, in some way, by religious feelings?"

"Why should I have religious feelings? If I believed, as you do, in religion, it might be fancied that the hell I suffer within me is the beginning of that which you talk of in the future world. But I believe neither in heaven nor hell: and whether I believe in any God, or not, I am sure I cannot say. And yet I sometimes think that if I could believe in these things, the dreadful darkness of my soul would be relieved."

"From what you say," I replied, "I have no doubt that the suffering of which you speak is caused by your religious sentiments, and by the life they have allowed you to lead. You know that man cannot derive satisfaction continually in any of the enjoyments of this world; and that after he has, as you have,

tried most of the pleasures of this life, there will be left a vacancy in his heart, which cannot be filled but with something higher and holier. Yes, Mr. Fuller, I appeal to you, whether you do not feel that there is within you a spirit to see what is good, and to approve it, and which makes you feel you ought to practise it; whether you are not conscious that your feelings and reason ought to agree with the will of God; and whether they do not make you certain, not only that there is a God, but a God of infinite perfections? And do you not know that your soul seeks for something more exalted, pure, and lasting than you find in your present life and belief? If this be so, then, will you not agree with me that the gloom and melancholy which you suffer, are produced by

the fact, that your spiritual nature requires a hope, and a religion, better suited to it than such as you now depend on?"

Fuller replied, "If I feel any thing of such a spirit as you talk of, it is so obscure that very little can be drawn from it. But if it is as you say, why do not all who believe as I do, have the same suffering that I have? Many, as you know, are as little troubled by what you call their spiritual nature, and spiritual wants, as are the animals from which we are said to differ so much."

"There are many reasons," I said, "why they should be unconcerned. Sinful indulgence often so fills the mind, and keeps a man so busy in the pursuit of pleasure, that it does not give his conscience time to disturb him; or, when it does, he has

false opinions that will quiet them till he engages again in sin. In this manner men make themselves insensible to the teachings of reason, and the warnings of their own consciences. But are *you* not conscious of such warnings, and of such desires of the soul? If you are, then believe me, this is the probable cause of those dreadful feelings which you cannot account for, or describe."

CHAPTER VIII.

HARDNESS OF HEART.

“WELL,” said Fuller, “if all you say be true, what am I profited by knowing it? Often, when I am alone, I am ready to rush to the decision of all these questions about the soul. So dreadful is the hell I sometimes suffer, that the thought of ridding myself at once of this suffering, and of life, at the same time, has come into my thoughts. I see no remedy, nor any thing like one, in what you say.”

“My dear Fuller, if your sufferings are caused in the way I have supposed, why may you not receive

benefit from the remedy which the Eternal Spirit has provided? If it be true that such are the wants of your soul, has not God provided a means of satisfying them? Yes, indeed, he has. Life is brought to light in the gospel. God has sent his only and well-beloved Son to take the place of sinners, and by his own merits and sacrifice to obtain pardon and favour for them—even the blessings of his love, and the comforts of his Spirit.”

“Ah! that might do,” the unhappy man answered, “if I could believe your system. But that is impossible. There is a settled conviction in my mind that I shall never believe these things. I have deliberately rejected them, because, as I have told you before, I cannot understand many of them. And

then I do not believe the Bible to have come from God: how can its declarations be of any comfort to me?"

I said to him that I had hoped that his feeling of the want of something more satisfying to his soul than the world could give, had led him to see the necessity of a divine revelation, and had disposed him to acknowledge the force of the evidence in favour of the Bible, as containing that revelation. I had then to tell him, candidly, that, if he still rejected the word of God, I knew of no way to relieve him of his distress. I concluded by mentioning some of the remarkable prophecies of the coming of the Messiah, and of his life—which were certainly made by Isaiah eight hundred years before the events took place—and

by comparing them with the history of the Lord Jesus Christ, as given in the New Testament.

I had several conversations with Mr. Fuller afterwards, but I never could perceive any change, either in his opinions or feelings, except that they became more determined and deplorable.

CHAPTER IX.

FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

It had sometimes been hinted to me that the strange conduct of the lieutenant might partly be owing to a habit of secret drinking. This I was disposed to believe probable, because he was in the state of mind in which men often resort to strong drink for supposed relief, and because it seemed to be natural to one who had so long been in the habit of indulging himself at table in this way.

However, I was not certain that this suspicion was true, until on one occasion Mrs. Fuller was called from

home, to visit a sick daughter at a distant station. Upon her going away, she begged me to be much with her husband, hoping that I might be the instrument of doing him some good.

At Fuller's request I took a bed in his own room. One night I was awakened by his getting up, and found he had gone into an adjoining room, where was a sideboard, and I could distinctly hear him pouring out drink. When he found I was awake, he made an excuse for what he was doing, by saying he was taking something to relieve a pain. But I now discovered that he could not only drink in secret, but that he could attempt to conceal the fact by a falsehood.

After some weeks Mrs. Fuller and little Julia returned. The child

had been refreshed by the journey, but in a short time the disease returned with increased violence, and never, in the course of my life, have I witnessed sufferings like hers. My lodgings were, at this time, not less than a hundred yards from Lieut. Fuller's, but frequently have my deepest feelings been moved by hearing the shrieks which her pain forced her to utter. Yet Julia was a patient child, and, when free from pain, she showed a sweetness and cheerfulness that were truly lovely. She sometimes talked of getting well; but she generally felt that it was probable she should soon die, and then it was surprising to me to witness her resignation and hope, nay, assurance of everlasting happiness, through a merciful Redeemer. What a contrast was there between

the life of pain and suffering, endured by her from early childhood, with her joyful hope of heaven, through the faith of the gospel; and the life of indulgence and pleasure, passed by her father, with the misery and despair of his unbelief!

After some time I was called upon to leave this station for another employment, and I bade farewell to all my acquaintance there.

More than two years afterwards I met Mrs. Fuller, who was on a visit to one of her married daughters. She was dressed in mourning, and I at once concluded that the afflicted little Julia had been released from her sufferings. It proved to be so. She gradually sunk under the pain of her disease; and met the approach of death, not only with patience, but with triumph.

Lieut. Fuller was enjoying his usual health when his wife left him, a few weeks before.

I again parted from the family, and in the course of time heard the following particulars of the close of Fuller's history.

He was put in charge of some public property, to dispose of, and to account to the government for the money he received. After he had been receiving this money for a year or two, it was discovered that he had used some of it for his own purposes, expecting to defraud the government without being detected. He was to be tried for the offence, but before the time for the meeting of the court arrived, Fuller drank so constantly and deeply of liquor, that he died.

CHAPTER X.

THE WARNING.

THOSE who have carefully read this narrative can scarcely have avoided noticing how many important instructions it gives. It shows us that some, who are the most carefully taught their duty to God in their childhood, may afterwards despise all that they have learned; disobey the laws of God, and give themselves up to sin. Lieut. Fuller had pious parents: his father was a minister: he had been early taught the Scriptures, and shown his duty: but he chose to follow the inclina-

tions of his wicked heart, and, to get rid of the stings of his conscience, tried to persuade himself to disbelieve that what the Bible says is true.

Fuller's early history shows the danger of keeping company with those whose example it is not right to follow. At college he chose the licentious, the profane, and the scoffers for his companions, and they soon made him as bad as themselves. He was afraid and ashamed to pray, as he had been taught to do: he gave up his religious duties, and joined his wicked associates in rejecting that sacred book which he had been taught to regard as the word of God.

We see that immoral conduct encourages infidelity, and that infidelity leads to immorality. When a

person, who has been religiously educated, wishes to indulge in sin, he will be glad to believe that there is no danger in doing so, and he will be disposed to listen to those who would persuade him that he has been mistaken in his belief and fears. And when one is led to doubt or disbelieve the holy Scriptures, he is glad that there is nothing to restrain him, and he will become as bad as he has the opportunity and desire of being.

Yet such pretended unbelievers commonly are deceiving themselves and others. If a man has been well trained in the knowledge of the Bible, during his childhood and youth, he may boast that he does not believe it, and try hard to make himself think so; but it will not be possible to drive from his heart the

testimony of his own conscience, and the secret fears which fill him with dread, when he thinks in himself of death and eternity. This was the case with Fuller; and we see how awful were the sufferings which his conscience brought upon him. If he disbelieved what he had been taught by his parents, why was he afraid? Why did he suffer what he called *a hell* in his own bosom? No: he *could not* disbelieve that God is a holy being, who will not suffer sin to go unpunished, if the sinner does not repent, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

This case, then, shows us the folly and the horrors of infidelity. His conversations show its weakness too, and on what miserable pretences unbelievers try to argue against the truth of God. Yet all the time it

was leading Fuller from one sin to another—from disobedience of his father to neglect of prayer, from sinful company to licentiousness, profanity, intemperance, dishonesty—until he may be said to have put an end to his own life by the indulgence of a beastly appetite.

We see how these habits hardened his heart, made him bolder in sin, and yet always kept him a miserable man.

Did religion ever cause such a life, and such a death? And was it not the rejection of religion that led Fuller on to his destruction?

Does religion make Christians discontented, and gloomy, and miserable? Do they look forward to the future with horror and dread? And do Christians die as this wretched man died?

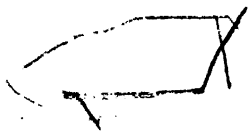
Compare with his the life and death of his 'little daughter. She had pains of body, but her mind was calm and happy. Fuller enjoyed health, but his mind was uneasy and miserable. She lived patiently through the sufferings that were appointed her, knowing that she would soon be at rest, and be for ever happy with the Saviour in whom she trusted. Her father was unhappy even when blessed with health, and free from pain, and when every comfort of life was within his reach; and as to the future, it was dark, dismal, and full of terror.

If the *belief* has so much influence on the life, and the life so much on the belief, there is a solemn warning to all who are careless and thoughtless about the manner in which they are treating the word of God; to all

who think it is of no consequence what a man believes; to all who do not allow their lives and their opinions to be directed by the truth as it is revealed in the Scriptures, and have not believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only hope of salvation for their immortal souls.

THE END.





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